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LETTER DATED 3 JUNE 1993 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF AZERBAIJAN TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

I have the honour to transmit herewith the text of a letter dated 3 June 1993, to His Excellency Mr. Don Juan Antonio Yañez-Barnuevo, President of the Security Council of the United Nations for the month of June, addressed to him by His Excellency Mr. Tofik Gassymov, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Azerbaijan, as received by facsimile.

I should be grateful if you would have this letter circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Hassan A. HASSANOV
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

Annex

[Original: Russian]

Letter dated 3 June 1993 from the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Azerbaijan addressed to the President of the Security Council

The Azerbaijani Republic welcomed the Security Council's adoption of resolution 822 (1993), regarding it as a serious and resolute measure on the part of the international community, which refuses to condone Armenia's b[illegible]tant violation of the sovereignty of Azerbaijan. The resolution, which demands the "withdrawal of ... occupying forces from ... occupied areas of Azerbaijan", has made it clear to the Armenian side, which has cynically defied the entire international community, that its actions against Azerbaijan are unacceptable and inadmissible. The resolution has also inspired us with hope and optimism regarding the speedy resumption of the Minsk negotiations, so treacherously cut short by Armenian aggression and the occupation of Kelbadjar, Lachin and other areas of Azerbaijan. As one of the initiators of the negotiations within the framework of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE), Azerbaijan is grateful to the Security Council and the General Assembly for their support for its peacemaking efforts in the Minsk Group.

However, I wish to express my extreme concern at the current situation. Exactly one month has elapsed since the adoption of Security Council resolution 822 (1993) but, to our great regret and disappointment, the steps undertaken by Azerbaijan in cooperation with the countries members of the Minsk Group have not had the desired effect.

The efforts of three States - the United States of America, Russia and Turkey - to carry out their initiative, which would make possible the step-by-step implementation of Security Council decisions and the resumption of the Minsk process, have been roundly rejected by the Armenian side.

Twice - on 6 and 26 May - the Azerbaijani Republic, desiring a peaceful settlement of the question of occupation, gave its consent to the schedule of urgent measures proposed by the three countries, despite the fact that the schedule contains a number of unsatisfactory elements. However, on both occasions, the Armenian side rejected the opportunity to find a way out of the impasse into which it had driven itself. I cannot refrain from pointing out that the unilateral cease-fire declared by Azerbaijan and which began on 24 May, was grossly violated by the shelling of the Sadarak (Nakhichevan) and Fizuli districts of Azerbaijan.

Armenia's intentions are clear and self-evident. Having created a powerful military base in the territory of Azerbaijan and having expanded its position of strength through the seizure and occupation of an increasing number of districts of Azerbaijan, the Armenian side, resorting to various pretexts, conditions and other subterfuges and taking advantage of the obvious weakness of CSCE mechanisms, is dragging out the process and using the time so gained to consolidate its military positions and preserve the status quo.

Such failures and delays create a dangerous vacuum. I should also like to state that there is a limit to Azerbaijan's willingness to seek a compromise.

We appreciate the efforts of the United States, Russia and Turkey, and also the chairman of the Minsk Group, to find a "peaceful" way of implementing Security Council resolution 822 (1993). However, that gives rise to the dangerous tendency of conducting negotiations on Security Council decisions that have already been discussed and adopted and which all parties are bound to implement. I am afraid that this quagmire will also engulf Council resolution 822 (1993); at the same time, the resolution deals with extremely pressing problems. I am not very optimistic about the forthcoming meeting of mediators in Rome, since their two previous efforts were complete failures.

The fragile peace process has been dealt a fair number of blows, and the next one may destroy what little has been achieved.

While a political settlement does not permit military operations, it does not rule out the use of pressure and force.

I believe that the current situation calls for the intervention of the Security Council which, in its resolution 822 (1993), decided "to remain actively seized of the matter" and requested "the Secretary-General ... to assess the situation in the region". Urgent measures must be taken to implement Council resolution 822 (1993), which would make it possible to return to the situation prevailing prior to the occupation of Kelbadjar and give CSCE an opportunity to continue the peace process.

Tofik GASSYMOV
Minister for Foreign Affairs
of the Azerbaijani Republic